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EMBAIXADOR WISBER LOEIS

RIGHT OF REPLY OF THE INDONESIAN OBSERVER DELEGATION
UNDER ITEM 6
SUB-COMMISSION ON THE
PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES
GENEVA, 22 AUGUST 1989

Mr. Chairman,

It has now become a custom for certain delegations and NGOs to year after year subject the Sub-Commission to the same issues and unsubstantiated allegations against Indonesia. My delegation would again, from the outset, place on record its objections to the wilful misrepresentations and rejection of their standard fare of contorted arguments, because if left unanswered, they may mislead and may even appear credible.

Those self-styled defenders of East Timorese have again spoken of the incomplete process of decolonisation of East Timor. To this, my delegation can only reiterate, as it has done so many times in the past, that the decolonisation of East Timor was completed when the Indonesian Government accepted the petition of the East Timorese people to become independent through integration with Indonesia in 1976.

Certain speakers have referred to the letter of Monsignor Belo to the Secretary General of the United Nations. It should be noted that Monsignor Belo's letter to the Secretary General was issued on a personal basis by him as an Indonesian citizen. In this respect, it is pertinent to note that the Holy See's Apostolic Pro Nuncio to Indonesia,

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Francisco Canalini, has stated that although the Monsignor is Head of the East Timor Diocese, his letter did not reflect the aspirations of either the Catholic Church or of the people of East Timor. Indeed, Monsignor Belo's letter and the open public discussion that ensued in East Timor be it within the Provincial House of Representatives, in the Bishops' Conference or by the clergy in the province illustrates and confirms that freedom of expression and human rights are observed and respected by the Government. The House of Representatives of the Province of East Timor dismissed the Monsignor's request for a referendum by adopting a decision on 25 May 1989 stating that the integration with the Republic of Indonesia has taken place, as enunciated by the Provisional Government of East Timor on 31 May 1976.

Having heard the allegations concerning human rights violations and bad socio-economic conditions in East Timor, my delegation would like to state the following: First concerning the statement of an NGO which refers to the impressions of a recent visitor to East Timor in May 1989, my delegation would like to point out that this is only one of hundreds of visits made by foreigners to East Timor, including parliamentary delegations, diplomats, journalists, tourists, and even football players from Darwin where many East Timorese live. While we naturally reject the NGO's derogatory statement on East Timor, the fact that this particular spokesman of that NGO and his colleague visited different areas of the province, including those claimed by our detractors as still being closed, only proves that East Timor is indeed open to the outside world. The Speaker of the Indonesian Parliament has even issued an invitation to the Portuguese Parliament to send its own delegation to observe the situation in East Timor and obtain first hand information for itself. We have also invited the Pope to Indonesia and during his visit he will also go to East Timor. We are now making the necessary arrangements for his coming visit in October this year. It is only fair to also take into account the positive reports made by a great number of recent visitors to East Timor, including the British Parliamentary delegation, Ambassador Kroll of Austria, Mr. Egon Alfred Klepsch, who headed a delegation of 6 members of the European Parliament

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and Mr. Klaus-Jurgen Henrich who headed a seven member delegation from the "Bundestag" or Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany. They have been most impressed by the progress in the province and found the situation in East Timor to be simply normal. Having seen for himself at first hand the true situation in the province, Mr. Klepsch even criticized those who have made critical reports on East Timor without ever having visited the province.

Secondly, on the allegations of massive arrests purportedly in anticipation of the visit to East Timor of President Soeharto in November of last year, my delegation has already provided its clarification to the Commission in March. Sixty persons were interrogated but only 8 were detained and only 2 brought to trial, 1 of which received a 7 month sentence and the other 6 months. With regard to the other allegations stating that arrests on a massive scale have taken place as a preventive measure in anticipation of the Pope's visit this coming October, my delegation would simply like to state that last May 25 persons were indeed questioned by the local authorities and subsequently released. These, according to Indonesia's detractors constitute gross violations of human rights when in reality, they were simply due process of law.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, with regard to the claims made by a certain NGO pertaining to the alleged discrimination exercised against those who were involved in the abortive coup d'état in 1965, my delegation would wish to state that this statement is a mere repetition of allegations levelled against Indonesia in the past. Having already presented a detailed explanation on this matter to the Sub-Commission last year, my delegation would simply like to repeat that practically all of those who were suspected and detained following the abortive coup have been set free and reintegrated into society. While screening for prospective officials and members of the Armed Forces does exist, this selection process is a normal security precaution which I believe also exists in

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many other countries. There may however be some over-zealous officials who have interpreted this to cover the "clean person" and "clean environment" concepts, but in no way does this constitute official Government policy.

I thank you, Sir.